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ABSTRACT

This essay, the concluding statement of a two-part article begun in the March 1977 issue of "INSIGHTS," presents a case for the creation of a language-rich environment in an intermediate-grade classroom. The essay suggests that children should read a great variety of literary materials rather than reading extensively in textbooks, that there should be cpportunities for a considerable amount of student-to-student and student-to-teacher oral and written interaction, and that skills instruction in the intermediate grades should focus on helping children learn to make their novice-level language skills function as tools for learning. A list of relevant resources for intermediate-grade teachers is included. (GW)

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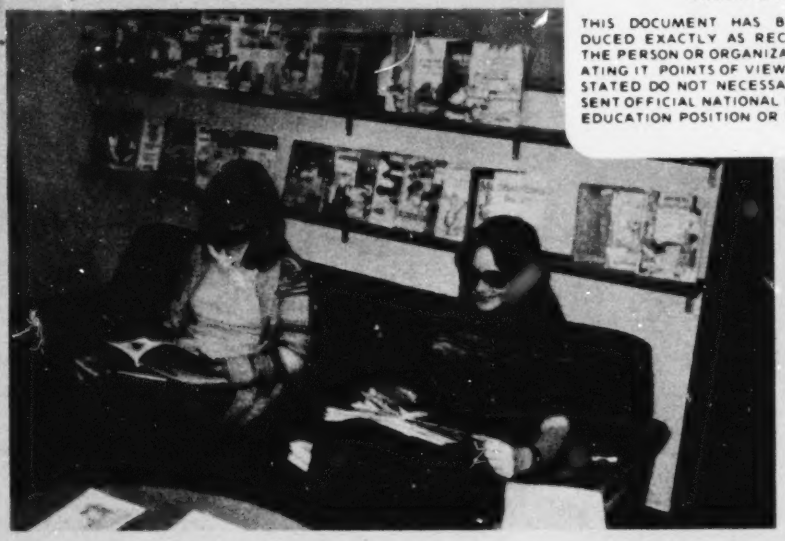

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Language Development in Intermediate Classrooms Part II

by Sheldon Schmidt

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INSIGHTS into open education

Language Development in Intermediate Classrooms Part II

By Sheldon Schmidt

The following is the concluding statement of a two-part article begun in the March 1977 issue of INSIGHTS (Schmidt, 1977). The thrust of the article concerns enhancing opportunities for greater language development in children in intermediate grade (4-6) classrooms.

The basic condition for enhancing language development in the intermediate grade classroom is that the instructional environment must become a more language-rich environment. Briefly summarized, Schmidt stated: a) that the language-environment of the home, peers, mass electronic media and the schools is generally too similar to the children's own language development to provide the necessary stimulation and modeling needed for continued language development; b) that an appropriate environment must include exposure to language usage much richer than the children's own ability to use language - language that is found readily in the best of printed materials for children; c) that while the children in language skills programs in schools are learning how to read, to spell, to write, to describe the language they have already acquired, skills instruction is not in itself capable of producing language development; d) that motivation for continued language development is largely missing from the classroom setting because children spend most of their language instruction time learning <u>about</u> language rather than learning to use language better through the frequent sending and receiving of meaningful messages; and e) that the level of language development is so central to comprehension of the ideas and feelings of others and the expression of one's own ideas and feelings that the educative process is impeded, both intellectually and in terms of self-knowledge, when language development is impeded.

<u>The Creation of a Language-Rich Environment in an Intermediate Grade Classroom</u>

Accepting a greater responsibility for enhancing children's language development need not require that there be a wholesale reduction in one's commitment to teaching important and varied skills and content in the intermediate grades. It does require that educators examine anew the printed materials used in instruction in terms of the quality of the language usage and the appropriateness of the materials to provide adequate motivation, interest and personal meaning for intermediate grade children.

I. <u>Printed Materials Used in Instruction</u>

One factor in providing an acceptable language-rich environment for the intermediate grade child is to provide opportunities for much greater contact with the literary heritage and life-lifting language found in the best of the literature written especially for children. In addition to providing many and varied experiences with language usage capable of modeling and stimulating continued language growth, children's tradebooks and quality periodicals encompass a rich and varied content capable of reducing the dependence on textbook usage.

<u>Content textbooks</u> present information and concepts in capsule form and requires, for most children, that the teacher attempt to develop meaningful background experiences and vocabulary and to set common purposes for reading. This requires whole-group instruction, much teacher talk, emphasis on convergent thinking and little student talk. The amount and quality of student input is limited when children are not permitted to read many different books selected and grouped around a common topic or theme. While <u>basal reading textbooks</u> are sometimes successful in engaging the children at a personal level (usually when they excerpt material from children's tradebooks), the language arts and content subject textbooks and workbooks neither engage the children personally nor ever give any relief from a rather cold, straightforward, expository writing style. Do children benefit that much

from all the textbook reading? Are the short readings in the basals conducive to good reading habits? Do we really need to be concerned at the intermediate grade levels with controlling vocabulary in the books they read? Is the "capsule" writing in content area textbooks really comprehensible writing for children? Goodman writes (p. 69-70):

> . . . the best way . . . to learn about variability in language structure is to have available a variety of language materials to read. The content of the materials needs to be within the interest and concept level of the student, but the greater the variety of types of writing materials, the more opportunity students will have to expand their ability to handle varieties of material . . . . By limiting students to a standard text and a few required stories teachers are severely limiting the students' opportunities to become flexible readers.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> No direct or formal teaching (is) necessary. The reader interacting with an author from whom he wishes to gain a message or meaning can learn a lot about the language of the author. Relegating readers to materials which have short words and sentences on the basis that this is easy for students may actually get in the way of students developing the ability to handle various material. Short, simple sentences can cause older readers confusion because they expect more from written language. It also conditions students to predict a somewhat limited number of sentences and author styles. If the concept of the materials is within the student's knowledge system and if the reader is interested in the subject matter he can often handle material which seems to be more sophisticated than his test scores might reveal. The reverse of this is also true. No matter what reading test scores indicate, if the material is beyond the knowledge and interest of the readers, they may not be able to comprehend what they are reading.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Often because students are having some difficulty with reading, it is assumed that skills materials which concentrate on words, sentences or sometimes paragraphs will be the easiest for such students to read. All readers should be provided with materials of some length . . . . Longer written material can also provide the necessary context through which students can build concepts as well as become acquainted with stylistic differences. In a sense, reading longer materials is easier than reading words, sentences or paragraphs.

Clearly, Goodman is stating that skill in reading a variety of materials, important content in the reading skills program in the intermediate grade classroom, needs little direct or formal instruction. Rather, the teacher who is able to select a variety of good reading materials for the children to read can be confident that the skills are being taught while at the same time providing children with language and skills enhancing experiences. Further, children's attitudes toward and interest in reading and confidence in their ability to learn through reading will be enhanced when the overuse of textbooks is discontinued.

Because the authors of children's tradebooks have the opportunity to write at greater length about a topic than do textbook writers, they have the opportunity and space to create interest, develop background experience, introduce new concepts and vocabulary and present the new content as an integrated whole. Also important is their willingness and ability to create a "human context" that respects the children's special point of view and need to identify personally with the content to be learned.

The most concrete of childhood experiences are the interpersonal experiences of learning to live cooperatively with others. When content can be presented to children through the experiences of real or believable fictional characters, as is so often done in children's tradebooks that include social science or natural science content, the experience is emotionally concrete for the children and intellectually richer. The children become "participants in" rather than

"observers of" what is to be learned or remembered.

The important difference between comprehensible children's books and the frequently incomprehensible textbooks, covering the same content, concepts and using much the same vocabulary, is the author's opportunity and ability to include the human side of every learning experience, be it scientific or literary.

Bronowski writes (p. 63-77):

> The knowledge that we get from (literature) does not tell us how to act, but how to be. (It) tells us how to be human by identifying ourselves with others, and finding again their dilemma in ourselves. What we learn from it is self-knowledge.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> . . . the self that we discover in this mode of knowledge (the literary) is every self and is universal -- the human self. Or better, each of us discovers the outline of his self within the human totality. We learn to recognize ourselves in others, and the character of others in ourselves. We compare ourselves with others, and the comparison shows us what we are and at the same time what man is, in general and in particular.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> . . . I hold that each man has a self, and enlarges his self by his experiences. That is, he learns from experience: from the experiences of others as well as his own, and from their inner experiences as well as their outer. . . . We must enter others in order to share their conflicts, and they must be shown to have grave conflicts, in order that we shall feel in their lives what we know in our own: the human dilemma.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> . . . We know what another man feels when he feels angry, because we have been angry ourselves. We know what tenderness feels like, and fear, and curiosity, and cruelty, and fun.

In addition to the language-rich, life-lifting language in good children's books and the opportunities to set content in a human context, authors of children's books are capable of providing the rich "imagery" needed to enhance the creation of meaning, both of the environment and of self, when words alone are incapable of doing so for the novice reader. Bronowski writes (p. 78-80):

> . . . science and literature are different, but they are vastly more alike than they are different. . . . what makes them alike is their origin in imagination. . . . science and literature, science and art belong together as matched halves of what is unique in human experience.
>
> I have called the unique . . . the human faculty of operating in the mind with images of things which are not present to the senses. The largest hoard of images that we create, and the most powerful method that we have for using them, is language. For human language is not confined to communication. . . . The human gift is to possess a second language in which a man converses with himself.
>
> With this thinking language we debate and weigh, we search our minds, we find in our heads the likenesses that give life to our view of nature and of our selves. . . .
>
> . . . it is these imaginative processes which make up the general state that we call consciousness . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> To be conscious is both to know and to imagine, and our humanity flows from this deep spring. When we imagine nature outside ourselves into the future, we create the mode of knowledge which is science. And when we imagine ourselves alive into the future, we create another mode: knowledge of the self. They are inseparable halves of the identity of man.

We simply cannot deny children this breadth of knowledge because we find using textbooks, which are only capable of transmitting lifeless information, to be more convenient to use.

The final issue is the matter of interest in reading. The appeal of textbook reading versus reading in the best of children's literature makes it imperative that children be given more nontextbook reading time in school. Children do not generally develop interest in reading from reading in textbooks, and if we do not leave them at the graduation door with positive attitudes toward reading and an interest in reading that carries over into adult life, they become less efficient life-long learners. They become learning-disabled adults! We owe them more.

II. Kinds and Amounts of Expressive Interaction

The discussion thus far has centered around language input capable of producing language growth. The other component in providing a language-rich environment in an intermediate grade classroom is to learn to provide opportunities for considerably more student-to-student and student-to-teacher oral and written interactions; an opportunity for children to develop their expressive language. Again, if this is to be done without reducing commitment to teaching important and varied skills and content, it needs to be done in a way that permits skill and content instruction to be integral to the oral and written language practice.

Oral interaction in classrooms during instruction has traditionally been discouraged because of the large numbers of students and the teacher-centered nature of classroom organization and published materials. The assumption has been that anything but quiet study would be disruptive. Moffett (1973) views the large numbers of students in an elementary classroom as an advantage rather than as a disadvantage, as it relates to opportunities for language development: (p. vi)

> We should use numbers (the large numbers of students available in a typical classroom), use them to generate in school the vast quantities of practice required for further language development that would be equivalent to the great amount of practice in oral speech afforded by the home. When reading has to be chosen, administered, and monitored by the teacher, students cannot read nearly enough, and furthermore dislike reading. When the teacher has to assign, prescribe, and 'correct' all the writing, students cannot write nearly enough, and furthermore dislike writing. When speaking is outlawed as bad behavior or restricted to 'class discussion' led by the teacher, students can't exercise enough the chief means of developing both reading and writing skills. . . . the real problem is that making the teacher the center makes the teacher a bottleneck.

Traditionally, children are permitted to interact freely with one another only during breaks in the "academic" business of the classroom. But, ". . . language is so thoroughly social in origin and function that it cannot be learned without social interaction." (Moffett)

An important distinction needs to be made in how Moffett uses the word "social." Moffett does not mean it to be used just in the sense of causal socializing on the playground, socializing over a bottle of pop or while discussing the latest hit records. That kind of student-to-student interaction is also important and serves to develop skill in a number of important language functions. But encouraging student-to-student interaction while children are studying their math, social studies, language skills lessons, etc. is also important, because it permits practice in language functions that are of a different purpose and content. Most importantly, interaction during ongoing academic activity would encourage "rehearsal" of the very language used in the language-rich books and materials of the lesson.

Obviously, teachers who encourage oral interactions during all parts of the school day will elicit all types of interactions during any one period. When interaction is encouraged it is unreasonable to expect just "academic" talk to occur. Academic and socializing interactions will be all blended together, but

that is as it should be! When we separate the kinds and topics of oral interaction into what is permissible in school, during a specific class, and what is permissible only during breaks between classes, we eliminate the possibility that the children will carry any serious academic talk over into their out-of-school hours.

This is truly an unnatural situation. Teachers at an after-school teachers' meeting will expect to engage in both. Businessmen at a business meeting will expect to engage in both. Because meetings are called to conduct business, the emphasis is on one kind of talk more than another, but to announce that "no personal talk will be allowed" would be seen to be ridiculous. The same is true in social gatherings. The emphasis may now be on more personal kinds of talk (a person who always insists on "talking business" becomes a bore), but much business is also discussed at social gatherings. To try constantly to separate the two, as we have done in schools, is so unnatural as to disrupt and impede normal language development in the children.

What about the writing output in classrooms to provide language practice and enhance language growth? While many of the benefits that can be derived from considerable oral languaging opportunities also hold true for writing, there are some differences in expectations, in the timing, amount and kind of feedback and in structuring real purposes for extended writing.

One does not usually write just to write. One writes to send messages, to help clarify one's own ideas, to create one's own meaning, to discover if one truly knows what it is he thinks he knows and to discover whether or not one can communicate ideas and meanings adequately to others. The children's writing time should be spent in writing in every "real" context that can be defined: "Non-speaking days" during which hundreds of notes would need to be written, journal writing, report writing, letter writing, directions, biography, poems and word plays, opinion essays, dialogue for scripts and stories, captions for pictures and newspaper articles, advertisements, etc.

While feedback in writing can never be as immediate as in oral interaction, the advantage is that the writing can be "held still" long enough to really examine it. Because the utterance can be captured and made opaque, there is much greater opportunity to gain first-hand experience in how choice of words, syntax, etc. need to be manipulated to create meaning. Having had many opportunities to see one's writing in published form, to have one's writing performed by others in a choral reading or as a play will permit, probably for the first time, the child to become an integral part of the evaluation of his own work.

Is it really important that other students be involved in the feedback process? Cazden has already been quoted (Schmidt, p. 9) to show how difficult it is for children and teachers to communicate adequately in a structured learning environment: ". . . power relationships exert a constraining effect on the language of the less powerful person. . ." Moffett expands that concept (1968, p. 194):

> It is much easier for peers than for the teacher to be candid and thus to give an authentic response. . . . A student responds and comments to a peer more in his own terms, whereas the teacher is more likely to focus too soon on technique. A student, moreover, may write off the comments of a teacher by saying to himself, 'adults just can't understand' or '. . . teachers are nit-pickers anyway,' but when his (peers) misread him, he has to accommodate the feedback. By habitually responding and coaching, students get insights about their own writing. They become much more involved both in writing and in reading what others have written.

Each time children read the writing of another, each time they participate in the choral reading of something written by another child, each time something needs to be edited for publication there is opportunity to give growth producing feedback.

Teacher time spent in reading, correcting and grading what is written should go in-

stead toward helping children publish their writings for others to read, to structure settings where formal presentations can be made by students just as adults do at conventions and workshops, to provide opportunities for children to perform dramatic readings of their own writings, to direct choral readings of their own writings, to write and direct a staged performance of a favorite book or one of their personal writings, etc. Teachers need also to be involved in the feedback the children receive after writing. But the kind of feedback they can give is unique only when they are able to provide a broader perspective than other children can provide and, especially, when they can intervene to help solve a writing problem when the children are truly unable to proceed on their own.

III. Learning to Use Language to Use Language to Learn

The primary grades (1-3) are spent in helping children become independent in reading and writing skills in the same manner as children have become independent in their speaking and listening skills. Most children are independent in their speaking and listening at this age in the sense that speaking and listening skills are used so automatically that attention can be focused entirely on the message. At this point oracy skills are used in a transparent manner (Cazden, 1974) as opposed to a later stage of development when the children are able to use language in an opaque manner, meaning that they are able to focus on the message while at the same time being aware of alternatives in language usage that might add clarity to the idea(s) in the message.

Being independent in reading usually means that children can decode most words on their own, that they can obtain meanings of many new words from context or by using the dictionary and that some degree of literal comprehension is possible. The children's independence in reading is, at best, very fragile! Writing independence means that the children can form letters, string letters together to form words, string words together to form sentences (sometimes), spell high frequency and phonetically regular words and capitalize and punctuate with some regard for "standard" usage. Again, the word "independence," as regards writing in an adult sense, must be used somewhat tongue-in-cheek!

We do not expect a child who has just learned to keep himself afloat in a swimming pool (an independent swimmer) to immediately help a non-swimmer who is drowning. The child's skills are those of a novice; he needs much additional swimming practice to make his own swimming automatic (transparent) before he can shift his attention to learning the techniques needed to deal with the frantic physical activity of someone drowning. He will need additional practice in using his life-saving techniques before he is ready to attempt to save a drowning person. The process is a three-step process: learning how to swim, learning how to use swimming as a "tool" and using swimming to save lives.

Learning language skills requires the same three-step process. By the end of grade three most children have learned "how to speak, listen, read and write"; then they need time to learn "how to use speaking, listening, reading and writing as tools for learning"; and finally, they are able "to use speaking, listening, reading and writing to learn." Schools that begin to use textbooks in each of the traditional curriculum areas at the fourth grade level are jumping from the "how to . . ." stage to the "using . . . to learn stage" before children have learned "how to use. . .".

Children's growth from novice level to adult level language usage can follow many paths. The paths which provide many varied language experiences lead to high level language usage; those which restrict the amount and range of language experiences will lead to somewhat less facility in using language. Methods and materials that attempt to teach about language provide little practice in using language. Methods and materials that encourage manipulating the language in many real-life situations provide rich languaging experiences.

Language-rich experiences which provide children with an opportunity to practice manipulating language in many real-life situations can be categorized in different

ways. One is to categorize in terms of the sender's purpose (Pinnell, 1975, p. 319):

1. Instrumental language: "I want," or "I need." Language is used to satisfy needs or desires. Very often it takes the form of a request.

2. Regulatory language: "Do this," or "Stop it!" Language is used to control the behavior of other people.

3. Interactional language: "Let's play," or "You and me." The speaker uses language to establish and define social relationships and to participate in the "give and take" of social intercourse.

4. Personal language: "Here I am!" Language is used to express one's individuality or to give personal opinions and feelings.

5. Imaginative language: "Let's pretend." The speaker uses language to express fantasies or to create an imaginary world.

6. Heuristic language: "I wonder why?" The speaker uses language to find out about things, to ask questions, to seek information.

7. Informative language: "I've got something to tell you." Language is used by a speaker to give information about the world he or she has experienced.

Opportunity for growth within each category is considerable. For example, instrumental language can develop from "Drink!" to "I would like a drink of water," to a citizen's letter to a state governor asking that he provide funds for better drinking water in a city, to an environmental group's publicity campaign to stop industrial pollution of a river that provides drinking water to many cities, etc. As skills improve and messages become more complex, several functions are integrated into the same message; the last item in the example above is instrumental, regulatory and informative.

Daily growth-producing experiences in each functional category should include opportunity for both oracy and literacy experiences. Real experiences are needed, not just teaching about the categories or learning the names of categories, or doing a workbook page or two that would familiarize students with the "function" concept of language usage.

Another way to label the range of language experiences that lead to high level language usage is in terms of the content of the message (Moffett, 1973, p. 21):

1. word play (rhyme, rhythm, puns, riddles, tongue twisters, poetic manipulation of sound and sense)

2. labels and captions (words used in conjunction with pictures, graphs, maps, etc.)

3. conversation (from oral improvisation and discussion to play scripts)

4. made-up stories (fiction, fables, tales, poetry)

5. true stories (autobiography, biography, chronicle, reportage, etc.)

6. directions

7. information (generalized facts)

8. ideas (generalized opinion and statement, theory)

Opportunity for growth within each category is considerable. For example, word play can include the small child's "Wee Willie, see Millie, tree hilly, gee Willie, etc." to rhymed couplets, to Alice in Wonderland.

Repeated experiences encourage extension within each of the function and content categories. As the children become familiar with and comfortable in using the categories,

they begin to understand how they can decide to use language in different ways to enhance the quality, the clarity and impact of their expressive language usage or to determine how a speaker is using language to persuade them to accept his point of view about something.

When the children's novice ("how to ...") language skills become automatic enough to permit them to begin focusing on "how to use" the language to best convey the message as well as on the message itself, they are precisely at the point where they have begun to bridge the gap to that of the mature language user. But they are still a long way away and the middle step, learning to use language to learn, needs considerable more practice before the children can turn all of their attention to using language to learn.

Is it possible that large numbers of students who find it difficult to succeed in grades four through twelve have difficulty simply because they have never really had the opportunity to learn how to learn in a system dominated by the need to use skills they have not been taught? If we are to make good on the promise to help children become independent language users and learners, we must provide much more practice in learning to use language skills to learn before we ask the children to actually use language skills to learn.

Languaging and thinking are so entwined that to make children independent language users and learners requires also that they become independent thinkers. Can increased language usage in classrooms, as described above, enhance children's thinking, too?

Sanders (1966) divides thinking into seven levels: memory, translation, interpretation, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. The levels do not suggest low or high quality thinking but rather different, more inclusive thinking. Interpretive thinking includes memory and translation as well as identifying relationships; application thinking includes memory, translation, interpretation and application of knowledge to the solving of a problem; etc. Opportunity to develop thinking at the seven levels also insures that there is development in creative thinking, critical thinking, convergent and divergent thinking. (See Huck, 1976, p. 728.)

Oral and written interactions in many settings are important because it provides continuous opportunity for developing thinking. Ongoing conversations provide feedback as to whether or not there has been understanding between the participants. Conversation that obviously breaks down suggests to the sender that there is need to resend the message using another language construction, to provide more background, to define a word or choose another. For the receiver it suggests that he needs to take special note of the particular context the sender is sending from, to determine whether or not the speaker means to be taken literally or not, to ask for clarification or definition. The point is that thinking is practiced continuously as messages are sent and/or received.

An example of how the reading, writing, speaking, listening and thinking can come together in one language-rich experience is presented below. The example is fictional but rather typical of children working together on a problem. The key is always whether or not the "lesson" involves children sending personally meaningful messages around a content that has a real-life purpose.

> The context: After having read and tried out a number of traditional jump-rope jingles, three children decide to spend their reading and language arts time writing a new jingle to be used at recess and during their after-school play.
>
> First child: "Let's write a jingle around the color blue. It'll rhyme with 'out go you.'"
>
> Second child: "O.K.! Let's try it."
>
> (The three children begin brainstorming together. One child becomes the scribe.) (Capital letters denote the four lines of the jingle; lower case letters denote the children's oral conversation during the writing.)

BLUE - A JUMP-ROPE JINGLE
By Kim, Cathy and Andrea

How about ---

BLUE IS A MITTEN; PICK IT UP, DO!

Yeh, you'd have to touch the ground between jumps. How about ---

BLUE IS A BLUEBIRD; ~~FLY HOP FLUTTER~~
SING A LITTLE, TOO!

That's good. How about ---

BLUE IS A ~~BARRY~~;

That "Barry" is a boy. You halfta use an "e."

Oh ya!

BERRY

How about ---

~~IT MAKES YOU WANT TO CHEW~~!

Mmmmm. How about ---

SHOW YOUR TONGUE BLUE.

Is tongue spelt like sung?

No, it's not spelled like any word I know. It's T-O-N-G-U-E.

We could put blue magic marker on our tongues and do it for the others.

(chuckles) It'd "gross 'em out!"

How do we end it?

How about ---

~~BLUE IS A COLOR; NAME QUITE A FEW~~.

That doesn't quite work out. It means "to name colors." How about ---

THINK OF ~~SOME~~ THINGS BLUE; AND NAME
QUITE A FEW!

It's supposed to end with "out go you."

That's o.k.

Well it should!

Hey, then you could keep jumping as long as you name blue things: BLUE SKY, BLUE PENCIL, BLUE CAR.

And then when you miss, the rope twirlers could say, "out go you."

Yes, and you could turn the rope faster and faster at the end.

What if someone says "Blue Frog"?

OUT GO YOU!

Hey, what did the blue mitten say to the red mitten?

I don't know, what?

Don't look so cheery! It makes me SAD. Get it?

Yeh, but it makes ME BLUE. Get it?

Really dumb!

Let's go try our jingle!

After trying the jingle several times and deciding they liked it, a final copy is written up to be placed where others can read it and use it. Or, a demonstration could be given to teach the jingle orally. The activity may lead to another jingle written by others, individually or in small groups, or this same group may try another. A large group could collaborate on making a book of original jingles and print copies for other classrooms. Should one of the members leave to do something else a natural regrouping takes place and the cycle begins again.

What could be learned from this experience? Well, more than can be written here, but a brief list would include: positive attitudes about reading and language arts, good work habits, making choices, making decisions, planning, risk-taking, cooperation, problem solving, making language more opaque, sharing ideas, evaluating ideas, giving feedback, taking feedback, learning that one's idea isn't bad just because it isn't used, establishing stronger social-emotional ties to peers, independence, etc. While this list does not include every single goal ever written for the intermediate grade classrooms, it is a good beginning! The children are listening, speaking, thinking, spelling, manipulating the language, reading, writing, and taking honest, growth-producing feedback from peers. They have had an opportunity to practice regulatory, interactional and imaginative language functions. They have had many opportunities to send and receive word plays, conversation, direction and information kinds of discourse. They have had an opportunity to practice thinking at all seven thinking levels, including critical, creative, divergent and convergent thinking.

SUMMARY

This two-part article presented a case supporting greater emphasis on language development in the intermediate grade classroom. Concern for continued language development stimulation is important because of the central role language development plays in intellectual development and success in school.

The need to do more than is presently done to enhance language development in the intermediate grade child exists because there is so little in the children's natural environment to stimulate continued language development. While the school spends considerable time teaching children how to read, write, spell, etc., that instruction does little to enhance language development.

Providing an environment which enhances language development requires both input that extends the children's present level of language development and opportunity to use language in a variety of settings so that oracy and literacy skills become increasingly functional. Reading in a greater variety of materials rather than the preponderance of textbook reading is a partial solution to the first concern and much greater opportunity to interact over the spectrum of discourse in an elementary classroom is a partial solution to the second.

Finally, a case was made for spending considerably more time in the intermediate grades helping children bridge the gap between their novice-level language skills and having to use those skills as the basis for all their learning. Because novice-level language skills are learned by most children before fourth grade, skills instruction in the intermediate grades should focus language on learning how to make those skills function as tools for learning. While some language arts and reading instruction time is traditionally given over to study skills and the use of resource materials in the intermediate grades, the activity designed to encourage practice in the skills is inappropriately set in workbook drills, rather than in the context of learning holistically about the content of self-understanding and one's natural environment.

RESOURCES

Resources available to help intermediate grade teachers provide language-rich environments and instruction, as outlined in the discussion above, include the following:

Fielder, Wm. R. (Editor). Holt Data Bank System - K-6, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974.

The materials, especially the activity cards, in this social science curriculum

encourage children to engage in many activities social scientists engage in in their professional work. Using language is at the heart of the process. Children make surveys, write reports, make maps and graphs, etc.

Gerbrandt, Gary L. An Idea Book For Acting Out And Writing Language K-8, National Council of Teachers of English, 1974.

This resource is especially valuable for its implementation of small group activity in a classroom. Small group functioning is broken down into: Research and Reporting, Debating, Specific Task, Instructive, Interrogative, Sequential Thinking, Digressive, Evaluation and Teacher-like small group functions. Special concern is given to facilitating regrouping of children and introducing children to the goals and purposes of small group work.

Martin, Bill, Jr. and Brogan, Peggy. Sounds of Language, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1972.

Teacher's manuals and children's books at thirteen levels are available in this K-8 series. The books are rich in oral languaging experiences of many kinds as well as in providing guidance in the manipulation of the written language. The selected stories, poems, etc. are models of the best in language usage and their use would do much to provide the language-rich environment needed to enhance children's language development.

Moffett, James A., Wasserman, Irving and Seifert, Bobby. INTERACTION - Level II Teacher's Guide, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973.

This teacher's guide is especially important for its discussion of the importance of high-level student interactions in classrooms to stimulate growth in the manipulation of language and in learning to make language usage opaque for children. Also important is the discussion of how children can learn to work productively in small groups, and the role of the teacher in a classroom where small group activity predominates. Forty-five paperback books are available and provide quality examples of content in eight types of discourse. The many books are cross-referenced to 238 activity cards that are starting-points for a large variety of languaging activity. Brief explanations are given for how the mechanics of the written language can be taught in the framework of the children's varied languaging activity.

Nuffield Foundation (The). Mathematics - The Later Primary Years: A Handbook for Teachers, New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1972.

This handbook manual assists the intermediate grade teacher in structuring many concrete math experiences for children that result in using many forms of informational and heuristic languaging.

Nuffield Foundation (The). Nuffield Junior Science, New York: Agathon Press, Inc., 1967.

These teacher's resource books for intermediate grade science instruction assist teachers in developing concrete experiences in science. As the children do their "sciencing" there are many opportunities to use the heuristic, informative and personal language functions. The materials include: Teacher's Guide I, II; Apparatus: A Source Book of Information and Ideas; Animals and Plants: A Source Book of Information and Ideas; and three background booklets for teachers - Mammals in Classrooms; Science and History; and Autumn Into Winter.

Smith, James A. and Park, Dorothy M. Word Music and Word Magic: Children's Literature Methods, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1977.

Chapter 15 includes an informative section on using children's tradebooks in a social studies and science curriculum.

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Moffett, James A. Teaching the Universe of Discourse, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968.

Moffett, James A. Interaction, Level II Teacher's Guide, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973.

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